

Meeting of the Audit Committee

4.00 - 6.00 pm on Thursday, 8 November 2018
in 1B16 - Technopark, SE1 6LN

Agenda

<i>No.</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Pages</i>	<i>Presenter</i>
18.	Quality assurance return to OfS (to review)	408 - 419	SW

Date of next meeting
4.00 pm on Tuesday, 5 February 2019

Members: Steve Balmont (Chair), Shachi Blakemore, Duncan Brown and Mee Ling Ng

Apologies: David Phoenix

In attendance: Pat Bailey, Michael Broadway, Natalie Ferer, Richard Flatman, Paul Ivey, James Stevenson, Shân Wareing, Amy Chiu, Justin Martin, Fleur Nieboer and Jack Stapleton

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Agenda Item 18

Paper title:	LSBU Academic Standards and Quality Report 2017/8
Board/Committee	Audit Committee
Date of meeting:	8 November 2018
Author:	Janet Bohrer, Director, Teaching, Quality and Enhancement
Sponsor:	Shân Wareing, Chief Operating Officer and DVC (Education)
Purpose:	To provide an annual report to the Governors regarding LSBU Academic Standards and Quality, to enable the Board to confirm that the Board is assured that LSBU is maintaining its responsibility for improving student academic experience and student outcomes and that academic standards are set and maintained appropriately.
Recommendation:	Audit Committee is requested to note the report.

Executive summary

Under the Annual Provider Review (APR), the Board of Governors is required by HEFCE (now OfS) to sign a statement by the beginning of December each year to confirm that:

- “The governing body has received and discussed a report and accompanying action plan relating to the continuous improvement of the student academic experience and student outcomes. This included evidence from the provider’s own periodic review processes, which fully involve students and include embedded external peer or professional review.
- The methodologies used as a basis to improve the student academic experience and student outcomes are, to the best of our knowledge, robust and appropriate; and
- The standards of awards for which we are responsible have been appropriately set and maintained”.

At its meeting on 1 November 2018, the Academic Board reviewed the attached quality assurance report. At the same meeting the Academic Board approved its annual report (attached) which demonstrates the oversight of the development of the

academic environment and reports on the approval of the academic regulations and oversight of their enactment.

At the meeting, the Academic Board confirmed that the appropriate internal quality assurance processes have been completed and that standards are appropriate.

The Academic Board recommends to the Audit Committee and the Board of Governors that it is appropriate for the accountable officer to sign the statement on behalf of the Board.

London South Bank University Quality and Standards Report 2017-18

1 Context

- 1.1 During the academic year 2017-18 higher education in England became subject to a statutory regulator, the Office for Students (OfS), established through the Higher Education and Research Act (2017). LSBU has registered with the regulator.
- 1.2 During the transition period from oversight by HEFCE to OfS, it is a continued requirement that the Board of Governors signs the annual December statement to confirm the Board is assured that:
- LSBU is maintaining its responsibility for student academic experience and outcomes;
 - That academic standards are set and maintained appropriately.
- 1.3 OfS registration is conditional on the development and publication of the LSBU Student Protection and Access and Participation Plans.
- 1.4 Operationally, Quality and Standards Committee (QSC) assures the Academic Board that standards of academic delivery meet expectations, and advises on the effectiveness of enhancement activity. To achieve this, the Committee receives a number of annual reports, detailed in the annual work plans. In addition each Committee meeting includes four standing agenda items:
- a. The quality and standards review, which enables discussion about specific issues arising from individual Schools. This is essential to preventing that issue occurring more widely across the University, and embeds enhancement principles. An example is the use of an exceptional third resit.
 - b. The minutes of the School Academic Standards Committee, logged with the QSC papers and reported on by exception at the QSC meetings.
 - c. Discussion of the academic regulations and the associated supporting procedures; for example, the introduction of an anonymous marking procedure during 2017/18, endorsed at the QSC Oct 2018.
 - d. The reports of independent reviews and academic audits; for example, the audit of course specifications and subsequent course specification project to align the university to CMA requirements in March 2018.
- 1.5 In terms of the broad overview of quality assurance and enhancement activity undertaken in 2017/8, the University supported the validation and revalidation of over 40 courses. We have provided approximately 11,500 instances of student support through direct intervention in modules and in the last academic year almost 12,000 instances of online support. The University procured and licensed lecture capture for the whole university. We organised over 1,000 examinations, with over 35,000 candidates sitting exams. We co-

ordinated over 200 external examiners visiting the university to endorse our academic standards, and have awarded many thousands of certificates to new graduates. We provided an aftercare service to thousands of former students by delivering information and documents to alumni and to third parties such as screening agencies and employers. We have managed our collaborative initiatives and the growing LSBU apprenticeship offer.

2 Annual activity reported to QSC during 2017-18

- 2.1 The Quality and Standards Report 2016-17 to the Board of Governors included a mapping of the university's processes to the European Standards and Guidelines. During 2018-19 a new mapping will take place against the revised version of the UK Quality Code published in 2018.
- 2.2 The University offers HNC and HND awards under licence from Pearson and the university must report to Pearson through an annual report. Monitoring these particular awards is crucial to our apprenticeship offer.
- 2.3 The first annual apprenticeship review was reported to QSC in January 2018. It has been clarified during the year that apprenticeship provision at level 4 and 5 will be regulated by Ofsted and subsequent meetings of QSC are now monitoring the ongoing arrangements for the preparations for an Ofsted inspection expected during 2018-19. See Appendix 2 for the annual apprenticeship review.
- 2.4 The annual course monitoring reports from each School were logged with QSC in May 2018 and the annual misconduct investigations report was discussed at that meeting. The annual review of Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditations and associated evidence was reported to QSC at the October 2018 meeting. Some evidence of accreditations are outstanding, and an update will be provided to QSC during the next academic year.
- 2.5 We participated in the national pilot of subject TEF reports (unpublished).
- 2.6 A detailed overview of the year is provided in the Institutional Examiner report. The reports evidences how the university discharges its degree awarding responsibilities, including finding appropriate remedies if necessary.

3 Academic audit and review activity 2017-18

- 3.1 Specific audit and review activity takes place on a planned cycle. During 2017-18 QSC asked for an academic audit of the LSBU course specifications. This audit showed that a few course specifications were missing and that the existing course specification template did not require all CMA compliant information to be provided to students. As a result a new course specification template was developed and a migration project undertaken to help the

university comply with CMA. The final stages of this audit work is being completed to confirm all courses specifications are completed and up to date.

3.2 Two reviews were completed of international partnerships:

- An internal desk based review instigated because our British University in Egypt partner informed us they were involved in a potential court case. We wanted to assure ourselves that LSBU had no liabilities in the case. This was confirmed by the audit.
- A independent review undertaken after multiple operational difficulties were reported about our Applied Science Bahrain partnership.

Both review reports were taken to QSC and discussed. Actions in relation to the reports' recommendations continue to be monitored by the committee.

4 The following reports have been reviewed in detail by Academic Board during the academic year 2017/18.

- Quality and Standards annual report 2016-17
- Pearson Report 2016-17
- Annual Review of apprenticeship 2017
- Annual Misconduct Investigation
- Annual audit of PSRB accreditations
- Annual Institutional Examiner Report
- Reviews reports BUE and ASU

Copies are available to any Audit Committee member on request.

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Quality and Standards Committee – Annual Work Plan 2018-19

Standing Items:

Item	Frequency
Chair's report	Every meeting
Academic audit reports and action tracking	As needed
Academic policies and procedures	As needed
Review of quality and standards since last meeting	Every meeting
Attainment gap	Every meeting
Academic planning and validations update	As needed
Recommendation of new awards	As needed
Post-graduate taught update	Every meeting
Post-graduate research update	Every meeting
Partnerships and international collaborations update	Every meeting
SASC Meeting minutes	Every meeting

Regular Items:

Item	Meeting
Annual work plan	October
Terms of reference	October
Validations annual report	October
Institutional Examiner Report and actions	October
Annual Provider Review draft	October
Annual Summary of external examiner comments	January
Annual report on student appeals	May
Annual academic audit report	May
Academic misconduct report	May
Review of academic regulations	May
Report on audit of responses to external examiner reports	May
Course monitoring reports	May
Audit report of undergraduate course monitoring reports	May
Annual School PSRB audit and accreditation reports	May
Annual School MOC reports	May

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Academic Board Annual Report 2017/18

Executive summary

The Academic Board is responsible for academic standards and the direction and regulation of academic matters. Where the Academic Board delegates responsibility it maintains oversight through reports from the Student Experience Committee; from the Quality and Standards Committee; and from the Research Committee.

In this document we provide assurance for the development of academic strategy, monitoring progress against academic key performance indicators; demonstrate the oversight of the development of the academic environment; demonstrate the oversight of academic ethics; report on the approval of the academic regulations and oversight of their enactment; and report on the granting of academic titles.

During the year to 31 July 2018, the Academic Board was chaired by the Provost, Professor Pat Bailey, and met three times during the year. Two joint strategy days were held for members of the Academic Board and Board of Governors.

1. HEFCE Quality Assurance Report

The Academic Board reviewed the quality assurance report to HEFCE at its meeting on 1 November 2017. The Board confirmed that the appropriate internal quality assurance processes had been completed and that standards are appropriate. The Board recommended the Annual Provider Review to the Audit Committee which reviewed it on behalf of the Board of Governors.

2. Quality and standards assurance

The Academic Board received the Quality and Standards review for 2016-17. The Academic Board discussed work planned in 2017/18 to continue the assurance of quality and standards at LSBU. The Board received the Institutional Examiner report that reported on the progress of recommendations made following the first visit of the Institutional Examiner in February 2017.

The Academic Board discussed the National Student Survey results for 2017 and the quality of student experience. The Board explored initiatives to improve the student experience and discussed the importance of the student voice.

3. Key performance indicators

The Academic Board reviewed the academic KPIs at each meeting.

4. Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

LSBU was awarded a silver classification for “delivering high-quality teaching and outcomes for its students”, and consistently exceeding “national quality

requirements for UK higher education". LSBU participated in the TEF subject level pilot during the course of 2017/18. By participating in the pilot LSBU was able to help shape development of the process, gain insights into what was likely to be expected of institutions, test LSBU's own readiness for subject level TEF and begin preparations in the University and the Schools.

5. Educational Framework

The Academic Board discussed the embedding of the Educational Framework within the curriculum. The template for course specifications had been amended, to allow for the Educational Framework to be fully embedded, and to ensure that it better aligned LSBU to the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidance in relation to course specifications.

6. Attainment Gap

The Academic Board discussed LSBU's data on the gap in attainment of good degrees (1st and 2:1s) correlated to race. Through the work of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion team and the Centre for Research Informed Teaching, LSBU was developing guidance, support and staff development for universal curriculum design which improves participation, engagement and outcomes for students at present at risk for demographic reasons of poorer outcomes.

7. Academic Regulations

The Academic Regulations of the University provide the means through which the standards of the University's academic awards, including research degrees, are assured. The Academic Regulations are supported by a number of procedures which clarify the way in which the university ensures that students are fairly treated. The Academic regulations are agreed each year by Academic Board. Suggested amendments are received from staff and academics across the University and then discussed at QSC.

Amendments to the Academic Regulations were approved by the Quality and Standards Committee in May 2018 and then approved by the Academic Board in June 2018. The Academic Regulations for 2018/19 continue to use the Crystal Mark 22140. The revised regulations and associated procedures were published on the LSBU website and can be found at <http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/policies-regulations-procedures>

8. Academic portfolio and environment

The University's quality processes underpin the academic approval process and the way LSBU assures the maintenance of academic standards, quality and enhancement. In 2016/7 a university procedure was introduced to prioritise courses for approval according to their likelihood to recruit based on their strategic importance, market information, and the level of risk (impact on resources) that they represent.

The Academic Board reviewed the programme for new course approval, revalidation and partnerships for 2017/18, and the courses approved for academic approval and to proceed to validation to recruit for September 2018. The Board discussed assessment innovation and the need to review and develop alternative forms of assessment, and the role of the Course Director and possible steps to better support the role.

The Academic Board discussed a review of the postgraduate taught portfolio and discussed the need for periodic review to prevent the proliferation of courses and to be reactive to changes in the market, and the development of clear paths of progression from undergraduate courses that link into postgraduate taught courses and then into postgraduate research programmes.

9. Ethics

The Academic Board reviewed the annual Ethics Report at its meeting on 6 June 2018 which stated that the Ethics Panels were running well. Functionality was being built into HAPLO to support applications and from September 2018 all applications would be processed through HAPLO. The Board noted the importance of training and support, in particular for those moving into a supervisory role.

10. Research

The Academic Board discussed LSBU's strategy for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) submission in 2021 at its meeting on 21 February 2018. The University seeks to deliver a substantial improvement in its performance in the REF, raising its Grade Point Average (GPA, where 4.0 represents a perfect score) from the 2.52 attained in 2014 to ≥ 2.80 in 2021. A code of practice was being developed to identify and support LSBU staff who had significant responsibility for research.

11. Joint strategy days with Board of Governors

The Academic Board held two joint strategy days with the Board of Governors in September 2017 and April 2018. Topics covered included: the new regulatory framework and the Office for Students, financial planning for the future, recruitment, retention and completion, and the student experience in higher education.

12. Appointment of professors

The Board noted the appointment of one emeritus professor in 2017/18.

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